

unmarried adolescent mothers.⁹³ Apparently far more teens consider placing their children for adoption than do so—12 percent in one study, even though 89 percent predicted a negative reaction from partner, friends, or family members.⁹⁴

Health care providers may not realize how important their views on adoption are to their adolescent patients. In one study, researchers found that among teens considering adoption, “While the most influential person was the adolescent’s mother, over half of respondents solicited advice [on legal adoption] from a professional—usually a physician or a nurse (the importance of providing counseling in health care facilities seems salient).”⁹⁵ A North Carolina adoption specialist reports that it is “all too common and can be extremely destructive” for a minor who has tentatively decided on adoption to face disapproval from one or more health care providers. According to this source, such interactions occur most frequently during hospitalization for delivery.⁹⁶

The AAP advises members to know state laws on adoption⁹⁷ and to indicate repeatedly to patients during pregnancy that the provider is willing to discuss the subject.⁹⁸ For their legal protection, providers should counsel patients and other parties about adoption for the same fee (no more, no less) they normally charge patients for other counseling. Otherwise they might

93. One source reports 5 percent: JUDITH MUSICK, YOUNG, POOR, AND PREGNANT: THE PSYCHOLOGY OF TEENAGE MOTHERHOOD 18 (1993); another, 3 percent: RICKIE SOLINGER, *Introduction*, in THE ABORTION WARS (1998); and, according to the AAP, 2 to 4 percent: *The Adolescent’s Right to Confidential Care When Considering Abortion*, 97 PEDIATRICS 746–51 (May 1996) and at www.aap.org.

94. Sandven & Resnick, *supra* note 16 at 217.

95. *Id.* at 220.

96. Telephone conversation with Sandy M. Cook, Director, Children’s Home Society of North Carolina (Mar. 2, 2000).

97. *Issues of Confidentiality in Adoption: The Role of the Pediatrician*, in AAP POLICY REFERENCE GUIDE at 473 and at www.aap.org.

98. *Counseling the Adolescent Concerning Pregnancy Options*, in AAP POLICY REFERENCE GUIDE at 180 and at www.aap.org.